

B1
and incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. Briefly, the Navigator utilizes a combination of MPEG content (such as MPEG video content and related MPEG audio content) and Navigator asset data to provide viewers with a means of selecting and ordering services. Navigator assets include bitmaps and navigation control scripts. As the set top box user is "navigating," the set top box extracts the asset data from a transport stream including video content and asset data and uses that data to provide bitmap overlays on top of the MPEG content. The control data within the asset data is used to define the layout of the screen and to take actions based on viewer input.

Page 4, beginning at line 20, to line 31:

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'The service provider equipment 102 comprises an asset storage module 125, a content storage module 140, a session controller 145 and a transport processor 150. Briefly, the session controller 145, in response to a request from subscriber equipment 106, causes requested content to be retrieved from the content storage module 140 and provided to the transport processor 150. Additionally, any assets associated with the requested content are provided by the asset storage module 125 to the transport processor 150. The transport processor 150 combines or multiplexes the content and asset data to provide an output data stream for the requesting subscriber. The output data stream for the requesting subscriber is coupled to that subscriber via a forward application transport channel (FATC) within the distribution network 104.

Page 4, beginning line 32, to Page 5, line 6:

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The content storage module 140 is used to store content such as movies, television programs and other information offerings of the interactive information distribution system 100 of FIG. 1. While the content may be stored in several forms, such as unencoded, encoded and unpackitized, encoded and packetized, encrypted and the like, the preferred method is to store each content stream as an MPEG-2 transport stream including a plurality of NULL packets.

Page 8, beginning line 18, to line 32:

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The transport processor 150 contains a multiplexer or combiner for multiplexing or combining the content information stream CONTENT provided by content storage module 140 and the asset information stream ASSETS provided by asset storage module 125. Within the context of the preferred embodiment, the transport processor 150 detects NULL packets within the content stream CONTENT, and replaces some or all of those NULL packets with asset packets from the asset stream ASSETS to form a combined CONTENT and ASSET stream. The transport processor 150 also contains a modulator for modulating the combined content and asset stream onto one or more carrier frequencies for transmission on the FATC, the so-called "in band" carrier frequencies. The transport processor 150 also inserts required system information (SI) and program specific information (PSI) packets into the multiplexed stream. These packets are generated based on the content in the multiplex.
